GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINES AND MINERALS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:7381
ANSWERED ON:12.05.2000
EXPLORATION OF MINES AND MINERALS IN KERALA
SURESH KODIKUNNIL

Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated new schemes and plans to explore and exploit the mines (both ferrous and non-ferrous) and mineral prospects in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Kerala is abundant of minerals of heavy metals like uraniums and thorium; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to exploit these minerals in the State ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS

(SMT. RITA VERMA)

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. Geological Survey of India (GSI) has undertaken following minerals investigations in 1999-2000.

(i) Evaluation of resource potential of clay between Taliparamba, and Kannur in Kannur district and exploration for clay and associated mineralisation in Kasaragod district.

(ii) Exploration for gold in parts of Attapadi valley (Kottathara block), Palakkad district

(iii) Detailed exploration for gold in Kurukkar Kundu-kallamala areas in Palakkad district, Kerala.

(iv) Preliminary exploration for gold in parts of Attapadi valley, Palakkad district.

(v) Regional resource surveys for dimension stones in Kasargod, Kannur, Wyanad, Kazhikode, Malappuram and Palakkad districts of Kerala.

Department of Mining and Geology (DOM), Kerala is presently carrying out exploration for
(i) china clay in the districts of Thiruvananthapuram, Kannur and Kasaragod,
(ii) lignite in Kasaragod area, and
(iii) estimating the reserves of clay for brick and tiles making in Kollam, Thrissur and Malappuram districts.

A number of minerals like bauxite, fireclay, kaolin, limeshell, limestone, silica sand and beach sands containing ilimenite, rutile, zircon, sillimanite and monazite etc. are being exploited in the State.

(c) & (d) : The State of Kerala does not have any independent deposit of uranium.However, heavy mineral sand deposits in Kerala contain monazite. Monazite is a mineral of rare earth phosphate and it contains up to 10% thorium oxide and upto 0.3% uranium oxide.

Monazite is recovered as a by-product of ilmenite mining by the Indian Rare Earths Limited (IREL), a central Public Sector Undertaking (PSU), under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd. (KMML), a PSU under the Government of Kerala. Monazite is processed for production of compounds of rare earths as well as of thorium and uranium.